GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:146
ANSWERED ON:28.11.2001
INDO-NEPAL TIES
GANGASANDRA SIDDAPPA BASAVARAJ;IQBAL AHMED SARADGI

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Indo-Nepalese relations, including various real and perceived irritants, that have cropped up from time to time, were discussed in September, 2001;

(b) if so, the main reasons for differences on these issues;

(c) the number out of them settled; and

(d) the details of the issues still remaining pending?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH)

(a), (b), (c) & (d) A Statement is placed on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN THE ANSWER TO THE LOK SABHA QUESTION NO.146 TO BE ANSWERED ON 28.11.2001 ON `INDO-NEPAL TIES`

Nepal is a neighbour with whom we share a very close relationship based on enduring bonds of history, geography and shared cultural values. There exists a framework of bilateral mechanisms between India and Nepal to effectively address all aspects of our relations under which from time to time interactions take place. Issues relating to bilateral Trade Treaty, demarcation of boundary and water resources cooperation were discussed by the two sides during last September, and also subsequently.

2. Discussions are currently in progress between the technical delegations of the two sides to resolve certain issues that have emerged during the implementation of the 1996 India - Nepal Trade Treaty prior to the extension of the validity of this Treaty for another five years. A Joint Technical Level Committee on India- Nepal Boundary (JTC) is working on the reconfirmation of the coordinates of the boundary pillars and re-demarcation of the alignment of the boundary through joint field verification. The JTC has a mandate from the two governments to complete the boundary strip maps by 2003. This is progressing satisfactorily. There has also been some progress in recent times in the area of cooperation in water resources. The Detailed Project Report (DPR) on the 6,500 MW Pancheshwar Project is under preparation by a Joint Team of Technical Experts and is expected to be completed next year. A decision has also been taken by the two governments to set up a Joint Project Office to facilitate work on the DPR of the Sapta Koshi and Sun Koshi Project.

3. India`s endeavour has been, and will always be, to address our bilateral problems amicably and resolve them expeditiously consistent with the perceptions, concerns and aspirations of the peoples of the two countries. The External Affairs Minister visited Nepal from August 17 to 19, 2001 to personally convey our deepest condolences to His Majesty the King of Nepal on the grievous tragedy in the Royal family in June this year and to reaffirm our commitment to Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba to building further on our existing close relationship and cooperation. During this visit, he also took the opportunity to discuss issues of mutual concern with the Nepalese leadership and the meetings he had were most fruitful, constructive and forward looking.